

The DIME NOVELS of an OFFICE BOY

By Paul
West

Gus the Gold Digger

AUTHOR'S NOTE.—"Dere's nuthin' into it," the main gazabo sez to me the other day when I laid me latest novel onto his desk, "dere's nuthin' into it, Chamosy, but you're gettin' to rite moar & moar like the real thing every day."

"Gee," I sez, tickled to death, "you don't mean it? Say, on de level, boss, lemme tell yer a secret. I bin redin' a whole lot lately an' tryin' to cop out a little stunt now an' then from some o' those guys dat's popular wid de bunch, an' I wondered if you'd see any improvement."

"You are passing through a metamorphosis, Chamosy," he sez, "and who knows but when you are completely transmogrified you may assimilate something of the brilliancy of ex-cuse me—let us say—Stevenson, or the ponderosity of Henry James."

"Nix on dat Chamosy boy stuff," I sez, "him an' his brother Jessie was good outlaws all right," I sez, "but I'm talkin' about writin'. Tell me on de square, boss, does yer notice anything in my new style like—well, one o' de fellows dat writes for dis mag—you know who I mean?"

"No," sez he, "I do not. Who do you mean?" "Ah, quit yer kiddin'!" I sez, "ain't youse outer de fact dat dis latest novel o' mine is—well, it's Rex Beach stuff, ain't it?"

"Chamosy," he sez, "now that you mention it I do observe something of Mr. Beach's style in your latest work. The plot—dealing as it does with the great outdoors, gold, the rough life of the west, and the delicate lace touch—yes, that is Rex Beach material, to be sure, and stooped of me not to have noticed it. But there is still another great similarity between you and this popular author."

"Name it, boss," I sez, tickled more dan ever. "Well," he sez, "you will note that Rex Beach's stories all begin on the left hand side of the column, and his lines read from left to right. Yours do also. That is a remarkable resemblance."

Well, d'ye know, gentle reader, I ain't sure whether he was kiddin' me or not, so I leave it to youse. Rede dis novel, an' if you don't say it's got as much of de red punch into it as any o' de Klondike stuff dis guy Beach turns out—well, rede it.

Yours for Art Always,
JIMMY the OFFICE BOY.

CHAPTER I.

Pure But Proud!

LENST, you begger?"

It was nix other than Simun Hardkassel the villidge millyunaire & awlso miser which spook them harsh werds & the wun to which he sed them was a meer yuth named Gus Golden of which you shal here fether air this tall he dun, becaws he was a brave & noble lad.

"Boo who! boo who! How dair you speak so to my sun?" cried Missus Golden the muther ov

our hero, "be as crewl to me as you plesed but call not my innermost child a begger four if he is wun the sin lies at yore dore, Simun Hardkassel!"

"Har har," laffed the kowardly broot, "what do you mene, whatever it is it is a baise kallumny!"

"Nay," Missus Golden sed, "i speke but the trooth & you kno it. Long yeres ago you & my husband, Mister Golden went gold digging together, he wroat to me that the too ov youse had fownd a gold mine but alas he never cum hoam, my pure husband."

"Faw, what is that to me wumman," sed the crewl harted monster, "i lost yore husband in the Rocky mowntins throo no fault ov mine & long air this he is food four wulves oar grizzly bawes!"

"But the sekrit ov the mine which you kno & which is where you have got awl yore fourtune, if you was not the koward which you are you wood shair it with me & my sun."

"Have a kare wumman," hissed Simun Hardkassel, "them is harsh werds & remember i hav you in my power!"

"har har" the nobel wumman laffed skornfully, "i defy you, just bekaws you happin to own the umbel cot in which i dwel you nede not think you kan trete me like the skum ov the erth, i defy you agen & agen!"

"Yes," sed our hero who up to this time had kep silent, now unable to restrane himself longer, "A i defy you two you misserabul desput!"

"Kurses uppon you" sed the mersiless retch "taik that!"

& he struck our hero a kowardly slap in the faise which cent him reeling like a drunken man oonly our hero, gentel reder, did not drink.

"O my sun" eride his muther running to pick him up, but he leped to his fete nimble & faising the skowndrel sed,

"Simun Hardkassel i may be oonly a meer yuth but let me tel you that if thay was not a lady pressent, i refer to my sainted muther hevvin bless her, & if yore gray hares did not protek you i wood chastise you within an inch ov yore kowardly life four laying perlooted hands uppon me, but as it is i spair you!"

"Boald werds" laffed Simun Hardkassel "& i hav killed men four less in my yunger days, but i fourgiv you becaws you are oonly a child! Hear, taik this & darken my portuls no moar!"

So saying he flung our hero a coin, a 50 cent peece & wood ov terned away, but Gus Golden was not the kind ov a boy he thot he was to be bribed with a half a dollar. Picking up the koin he flung it at Simun Hardkassel saying,

"Taik back yore ill got ganes, i spurn it, & lissen to me. You may kepe the sekrit ov the hidden gold mine but i wil find it & when i do, Simun Hardkassel bewair four i wil hav no mersy on you! Kum muther let us henst!"

"What mene you" sed Simun Hardkassel his faise blanching with fere, "what mene you?"

"Neveryou mind what i mene" sed our hero terning on his hele, "but you wil roo the day you spak harshly to Gus the gold digger, curses on you!"

CHAPTER II.

The Lost Gold Mine.

ALASS my sun i fere you hav dun a wrash thing to speke to Simun Hardkassel that way" sed Gus's muther that nite when thay was in there

umbel cot benethe the hill, "he is a hard harted man & will tern us out ov howse & hoam."

"Fere not muther" sed Gus nobel lad which he was, "but thay is wun thing you never toald me & that is abowt my farther riting to you abowt that gold mine, where is his letter?"

"Sense you ask me i wil get it" sed his muther, & she did. The nobel boy cood skaree retrace the teers as he gaized uppon the dokkymet & he sed, shaiking with emoshun,

"Alas muther dere dident farther rite a luvly hand? But i wood be aloan & peroose the letter four unless i am mistaken it may hoald a sekrit which wil maik us ritche, leve me!"

Far into the nite did our hero set up reding & reding oaver agen his farther's letter but alas it contained no sekrit ov the hidden gold

mine that he cood find, untill just as the first fante flush ov dawn was tinting yon hills he happened to tern the shete ov paper over, & he sene sumthing which maid his eyes pop out ov his hed!

"Muther o muther" he eride, "rise i pray you, hear is wonderful noos!"

"What is it my nobel sun" sed his muther entring the room, "o what, kepe me not in suspensit!"

"The sekrit ov the lost gold mine" sed our hero, "hear, on the back ov the letter ov my reveared farther it is ritche so awl may rede just exactly where the mine is in the Rocky mowntins!"

"My nobel sun," his muther sed, "how did you, happin to think to look on the back side of the letter?"

"Twass Fait" sed Gus modestly, "& it has delivered Simun Hardkassel into our hands, four this very day i start four the Rocky Mowntins to find the lost gold mine & when i return we shal be ritche beyond the dremes ov avarish!"

"May kind providenst spede yore qwest my nobel sun" his muther sed, "& i hoap you get the gold befoure the fersst ov the month four Simun Harkassel wil be after me four the rent & alas i cannot pay it unless you do!"

"Indulge no idol feres muther dere" sed our hero, "but prepair my luntch four the time is shoart & i must away!"

It was but a matter ov a few moments to get redy & then our hero kissed his muther a fond fairwel & was gone.

But he did not go direk to the Rocky Mowntins, insted he terned his footsteps towards the manshun where Simun Hardkassel lived. No, he did not wish to see that hard harted monster agen, but his bewtiful dawter Ermentrood which he luvd derly & who terned his tender pashhun. When he toald her he was going to the Rocky Mowntins she eride & sed,

"O leve me not my hero Gus, becaws if you do my farther wil kepe his treat to maik me marry Couwt Perssival dee Vere the forrun nobel-man which is staying hear."

"Fere thee not fare Ermentrood" sed our hero, "when i get back from the Rocky Mowntins yore farther wil not dair refoose me yore hand, & now fairwel, i must waist no moar time maiking luv, wun moar tender kiss & then ho foar the hidden gold mine!"

So saying our hero strood nobly down the frunt path, but even as he dun so a hideous faise peeked out frum behind the parler kertins, saying,

"Har har, so you think to foil Couwt Perssival dee Vere from marrying Ermentrood four her monney do you, never, four i wil tel her farther what you hav sed & wo be unto you!"

CHAPTER III.

The Sekrit ov the Mowntins.

ALASS wil i never git there?"

It was nix other than Gus Golden the Boy Gold Digger which uttered them werds, & no wunder his yuthfull hart was busting with



Yours for Art Always, —Jimmy.



With Gus's Help They Had Little Difficulty Lugging It.